1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

ner's tribe or with Indians outside of the Kaska nation, but plans for such unions are not 582
seriously blocked if previous marriages have helped cement relations between such groups, and if the match itself is regarded as a good one. It may also be noted that a desirable marriage between members of the same moiety is readily condoned if one of the partners, or a partner's mother (sometimes even a maternal grandmother), has been only conventionally classified with the side and originally came from a tribal district lacking dichotomous organization.[21]

Marriage may, as usually happens, be directly negotiated between the boy and girl or 584
it may be originated by the father of a marriageable daughter. Generally a boy proposes to a girl, who either indicates her acceptance or rejection or else refers him to her father. Consultation between the boy and his sweetheart's father is regarded as the desirable and correct way of negotiating marriage. Old Kean complained that nowadays many couples agree to live together without consulting the girl's parents and, as a result, worthless men often succeed in marrying good girls. The pattern of consulting the girl's father may be only indirectly accomplished, as when a shy youth requests permission to trap with a man, leaving the more fundamental motive of his petition to be inferred. The prospective father-in-law is ideally regarded as an arbiter qualified to pass upon a youth's suitability as a husband. During the period of field work one instance was noted of a confident and headstrong part-Tahltan girl asking a boy's father for permission to marry the latter's son. This behavior was recognized as atypical and was pointed to as an unfavorable sign. "That means they're not gonna stay together long," Old Man opined. "Better if boy run after the girl." River Joe, whose son was being sued, appeared less concerned with this aspect than with the fact that there was distant kinship between his and the girl's family. He invited the ethnographer to trace this relationship and was pleased to learn that the children were distant cross-cousins.

The second pattern of marriage is illustrated when, as sometimes happens, a man with a marriageable daughter keeps watch for a likely son-in-law. If among the unmarried young men (or white men) he notes one who is unrelated and who is not by birth a member of his daughter's moiety, he may invite the prospective son-in-law to trap with him for a winter. This situation, once the boy accepts the invitation, is calculated to bring the young people into intimate association. If the couple decide to stay together, the man's visit assumes the character of bride service and a marriage is recognized.

In cases where marriage has been initiated by a young couple and approval has been re- 583
ceived from a girl's father, the son-in-law changes his residence to the winter settlement of his fiancée and begins an indefinite period of bride service, which is ideally stated to last about a winter but which really has no formal termination in cases where matrilocal residence continues permanently. The boy hunts for his father-in-law's family and traps on the latter's trap line. Fur that the youth accumulates becomes his own, the family looking to the young man mainly for additional meat and necessary assistance. Sexual relations are implicitly permitted during the period of bride service, so that this relationship is often tantamount to marriage. In at least one instance, however, the expectations of a young man

[21] See above, p. 133.

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[836]
[784]

A few stole away at night to visit or sleep with sweethearts, but this was not the rule. Most lads were afraid to have any connection with the opposite sex, at least during their training period, for it was believed a lad doing so would be retarded in obtaining a manitou and would never be a good hunter. It is said the young men had a great deal of fun among themselves and many did; married men consider the years they spent in the young men's lodge as the most happy time of their lives.

MARRIAGE

582 Persons could only marry members of the opposite phratry and never one of their own. 584 The male took the initiative and did the choosing in marrying the girl of his choice. His mother with her husband then went to see the girl's parents. If they were agreeable the marriage was thereupon arranged and the lad was told he would get the girl. 583 The lad now commenced to work for his future parents-in-law. He gathered and split wood for them whenever he saw they required help of this kind, and he also hunted frequently and gave them the game he killed. He was very attentive to them and was constantly on the alert to do them some service. If his future parents-in-law went off on some lengthy hunting or trapping trip he accompanied them and worked for them. He also hunted

583 and trapped and gave all he killed to them. In their turn they saw he had plenty to eat and was well provided with moccasins. He did not sleep and eat in the family lodge but outside in a shelter by himself, and it was the duty of his future mother-in-law to feed him. He continued thus to work for his future wife's parents for several months. There was no set time, but most lads worked from two to three to upwards of six months. 583 A good many worked an entire winter. Arriving at some 584 convenient time the lad's parents again met the girl's parents, this time to discuss the marriage presents or purchase price of the bride. These presents generally consisted of blankets, skins, shells and other things of standard value. After the value of the presents had been agreed on the lad's parents again visited the parents of the bride accompanied by some young men relatives or friends of the lad who carried the presents. When the latter had been received and had been passed upon as satisfactory a date was set in the near future for the union of the prospective bride and bridegroom. Sometimes a feast was given to the bridegroom's parents by the parents of the bride. This was done by some wealthy 583 people. On the date appointed the bride's mother took the bride to the house of the bridegroom's parents and delivered her to the bridegroom. The couple were now considered fully and ceremonially married. The presents

or had become pubescent. 500

Girls when married at once took off their 585
necklaces, collars and other ornaments they wore which 301
were emblematic of maidenhood.

They also changed their style of hair dress 585
and henceforth wore their hair as women did in a single 302
braid which hung full length down the back. After
marriage they seldom painted their faces except for
dances. There were no marriage dances nor marriages 583
by touching as among the Salish tribes. Neither were
there marriages by elopement nor by feats of strength,
etc., such as wrestling as is said to have been the
case in some tribes to the North (Eskimo, for instance).

Sometimes a lad was suspected of sleeping with 836
a girl and was found out. The girl's mother then asked 584
her daughter the truth of the matter. She would
acknowledge what she had done and give her reason as
owing to her love for the lad or man. The mother then
went to the lad's father and told him. If the two 565
families were of about equal rank a marriage was then 583
generally easily arranged. If however the lad's father
was very wealthy or of high rank and the girl belonged
to a very poor or low family there was often difficulty
and much bad feeling. Perhaps the lad's father did not
wish his son to marry into such a family. If the lad
was in love with the girl he sometimes managed after a

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582 time to get his father to assent. The marriage was then consummated in the usual way. Once the girl was admitted into the family by marriage she at once was considered as high and equal with them, and vice versa if a poor boy thus married a girl of a wealthy or high family. If the father would not consent to his son's marriage and perhaps the son used no persuasion in the matter, then he had to settle the trouble by paying a lot of goods to the girl's parents. Often the payment was more than he would have given had it been regular marriage presents.

581 Marriages were occasionally arranged for very young children. Two families well disposed towards each other and having young children of about equal age agreed between themselves that when their children grew up they should marry each other. This was sometimes carried out. No presents were given until the marriage actually took place. Sometimes, however, the two children when grown up did not like each other, in which case the agreement between the parents was allowed to lapse. Nothing of course had been done to make the agreement binding. Occasionally the parents of a very young girl or girl under age offered or promised their daughter when of age to some wealthy man or man who was much liked or esteemed. Generally when the girl came of age she became the wife of this man in the ordinary

ceremonial way, even if he was very much older than she was. Anieti or people who were of high rank through wealth always aimed to have their children marry among their own class. Sometimes lads or girls of this class followed their hearts and against their class interests married persons who were poor and of low rank. This, however, was exceptional, as it was not easy to go against the wishes of their parents and relatives, and, as it were, lose their cast. This is now almost all broken down as people are about equal to each other nowadays in wealth and the old aristocracy of wealth exists no longer. If a husband habitually ill-treated his wife her father could take her back by paying him for his loss. This was about equal to or a little over the value of the marriage presents received for his daughter and the gifts the husband after marriage had given to him.

Polygamy was practised, but very few men had more than one wife. A few had two. This practice had now died out. No woman had more than one husband.

If a man's wife died her unmarried sister was supposed to become his next wife. If for some reason he did not marry, his children if young were taken by his deceased wife's relatives to be reared by them.

As a nephew succeeded his uncle and inherited his property he also was expected to marry or at least support his uncle's widow.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
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children, and when he realized this promise another reward accrued to the husband. Not only did marriage provide a dependable source of sexual gratification but a young man secured his reputation in the community when he no longer had to "bother" girls or other men's wives in order to obtain such satisfaction. On the other side, women welcomed marriage for its economic rewards, like an abundance of food and skins for clothing, as well as for sexual opportunities and the children that might follow.

Boys married around the age of 18; that is, when they were old enough to meet the primary qualification of a husband, namely, to be able to earn a living by hunting. Girls married when about 16 years old or shortly after menarche. An older brother ideally took a bride before his junior but an elder sibling's prerogatives were not so great that parents interfered with a younger brother's marriage plans. While great disparity between the ages of spouses sometimes occurred, it was never happily regarded. Public opinion maintained that because an old man could not make his living as easily as a younger man he could not expect to marry a young wife. The union of a mature woman and a young man received more tolerance but even then "much talk" might follow. Men incapable of making a living by hunting, or those who enjoyed the reputation for stinginess (they "try to hold on to meat and not share it; they hunt alone") sometimes never married. Also there were men who resembled the women previously described and showed little interest in women or sex. They too refrained from marrying.

Blood relatives as close as parallel cousins of the second and third generation came under the incest taboos as did members of the same matrilineal moiety. Marriage to a maternal cross cousin was preferred. Other unions were frequently concluded by sister exchange. Marriage outside of the tribe (macrocosmic group) was not too well regarded. People from abroad, it was felt, could rarely be trusted. Also intertribal marriage might lead to trouble in cases where the members of such a group learned about some mistreatment suffered by one of the outmarrying persons. Marriage to captive women certainly had a place, single men regarding the war party as an opportunity to secure a wife. If the defeated group happened to recognize moiety distinctions a warrior took only a woman of the opposite exogamous division. The initial treatment of captive wives was apt to be harsh but warmer relations usually followed the birth of children. Married men never secured additional spouses through war. Women objected strenuously to sharing a man with anyone but a closely related co-wife.[8] What appears to have been literal bride purchase obtained in unusual circumstances, as when a rich man negotiated for the daughter of a poor family. In return he paid clothing, other valuables, and presumably continued to supply food to his parents-in-law. Such a marriage was not highly esteemed.

Generally a period of bride service, lasting as long as two years, preceded marriage. During this interval a young man supplied meat, skins, and wood for the family of his intended bride, sometimes without directly announcing his intentions to the parents. His plans were probably well understood and he usually enjoyed sexual relations with the girl of his choice. Ideally the period of bride service allowed a youth to demonstrate

[8] But among the Sarsi a captive woman was said to have made an excellent co-wife. Honigmann, *Changes in Sarsi Social Culture* (manuscript).

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his capacity as a provider and worker. With the consent of the girl assured, a boy communicated his plans to his parents. Following their approval his mother visited the girl's mother and the two families arranged a feast at which they exchanged gifts amidst much joking and expressions of good feeling.[33] The two fathers addressed each other "brother-in-law" while the mothers said "sister-in-law." Following the celebration the couple still refrained from openly sleeping together for another four or five days, perhaps out of shyness.

A variant pattern of marriage occurred when a young girl, who had begun to menstruate, named the boy who had "started" her. The mother then informed the youth's mother whereupon it was up to the latter to accept the girl as a daughter-in-law. Should the seducer have been a poor hunter, the girl's family might claim one of his more adept brothers for a son-in-law. Elopements when a girl's parents rejected a suitor took place with the young couple running off, sometimes to another country. With time the parents could usually be won over, perhaps after the advent of a grandchild. Two atypical forms of marriage widely distributed in the northern Athapaskan area remains to be mentioned, namely "wrestling for wives" and childhood betrothal. The first ensued when a strong, unmarried man visited a camp in which he was a stranger. Shaking hands he suggested to the husband that they wrestle for possession of the latter's wife. A man thus approached could decline the challenge. On the other hand his gambling impulse might be aroused. If defeated he saw his wife go with the opponent. Sometimes the angry loser directed sorcery against the successful challenger, aiming to destroy the latter's hunting power. Bystanders broke up a wrestling match that showed signs of developing into "bad trouble" like murder. Occasionally parents contracted engagements between children, exchanging gifts of children's clothing. A girl still in infancy might be betrothed to a boy two or three years old. If both children survived but later developed a distaste for each other, their fathers might press them to marry. In cases of extreme recalcitrance a sister or brother was substituted for one of the partners.

Matrilocal residence followed marriage. After two or three children had been born a husband usually asked his father-in-law for permission to camp by himself. A "good" father-in-law agreed, adding some such advice as, "Be careful; don't go up in the mountain in winter" (because of the many slippery and dangerous places where a hunter could meet injury). Monogamous families were most common. Few men could afford to support as many as two wives and the children they produced.[34] Polygyny

[33] "Among the Pellys and Little Salmons," the custom was that if a man wanted a wife he made her a present of some kind. If he was satisfactory as a son-in-law to the girl's parents the present was kept, if not, it was returned. If the present was kept he had to keep on giving game and skins to the girl and her parents. (Field, *Unpublished manuscript* [1913], 9.) Among the Tlingit, when an engagement between a boy and girl had been concluded, the boy's mother gave gifts to the girl's family which were distributed by the husband among his "daughter's people." Then he gave a dowry to the suitor's friends. Swanton, *Social Conditions, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 428.

[34] Informants reported that Taku men often had four or five wives. In the Pelly River area "there is no limit to the number of wives so long as you can support them, but of late years . . . there are very few with more than one wife." (Field, *Unpublished manuscript* [1913], 9.) Among the Tlingit polygyny was widely practiced. Jones, *Study of the Tlingits of Alaska* (1914), 120.

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Dease River
Tsalona
Upper Liard

to a proposed match. Where such permission was withheld, elopement might follow. The eloping couple then lived alone or, more often, joined another camp. Sometimes angry parents pursued the young people and beat the youth if they caught him. In the normal course of events a young man undertook bride service for a year in the home of his father-in-law. During this period he contrived to have secret sexual relations with his intended spouse. A wealthy father-in-law terminated bride service with a feast, after which the couple were regarded as man and wife. Occasionally fathers arranged engagements between children. Contracted without gift exchange, these agreements were not absolutely binding on the young people and could be abrogated for sufficient cause. Only single men utilized the war party to secure a wife. Residence after marriage was matrilocal.

Sororal polygyny remained limited to wealthy men. Never did a man live with more than two women, plural wives "always got along with each other." The idea of an unrelated woman as co-wife was strongly resented and the presence of such a woman in camp would provoke endless quarreling.[29] Fraternal polyandry existed and is illustrated in a tale reported by Teit, titled "The Deceitful Wife."[30] A woman, married to two brothers, happened to be raped by a war party that prepared to attack her people. The ordeal weakened the woman but the enemy offered her ptarmigan. In return she promised to conceal what had happened. The mother-in-law, however, became suspicious and spoke to her sons. As a result the two husbands sensed danger and proposed to the wife that they all three enjoy a last good meal together. They thereupon killed the woman and fled. An upper Liard River informant reported knowledge of a Dease River Indian who had shared his wife with nine brothers. The ten men alternated in cohabiting with the woman and no trouble ever occurred between them. However, the brothers became extremely jealous when they saw a stranger talk to their wife and reported the incident to the senior husband who warned off the intruder.

Divorce sometimes followed adultery and occasionally a man quit a barren wife. Upon her husband's death a widow became the responsibility of her brother-in-law.

Tsalona. People favored marriage between cross cousins. "Its good for them," the informant explained. The levirate and sororate both obtained.

OLD AGE AND DEATH

Upper Liard Kaska. Many Indians did not live to see old age. Others found their declining years filled with waning prestige and dissatisfaction. With menopause cul-

[29] Allard says: "Polygamy existed among them when they were all pagans. One man would take as many wives as conditions would allow. For instance, if he were a good hunter he would take more than one wife. When I visited the Kaska for the first time in 1925, I found no polygamy among them ... they had never seen a Catholic priest in their country, but being in their native state more moral than the other races of Indians, the influence of their brethern, the Si kan ni, led them easily to abandon polygamy." (Allard, *Notes on the Kaska and Upper Liard Indians* [1928], 25.) We feel incined to ascribe the loss of polygyny much more to the influence of the white men who invaded the Dease River valley after 1872. Cf. Honigmann, *Culture and Ethos of Kaska Society* (1949), 44–45.

[30] Teit, *Kaska Tales* (1917), 461–462.